Regular Meeting:

Roll Call:

X Chair Ms. Rhonda Smiley
X Member Ms. Mary Ann Slattery
X Member Mr. J. Anthony Snorgrass
X Member Mr. John Zawacki
X Member Mr. Gilbert Castro
X Ruth Benien, Administrator

X (Present)
E (Excused)
U (Unexcused)

Call to Order:

Chairperson Rhonda Smiley called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. Commissioners Slattery, Snorgrass, Zawacki and Castro were present.

Public Comment: A member of the public appeared after the Public Comment session and was allowed to speak out of order. His concerns were with respect to the Quindaro Ruins and the way in which the recent dedication ceremony had been handled and the failure to have included various individuals and groups on the plaque and in the ceremony. He expressed additional concerns about the use of grant monies with respect to the site. He was given one of Administrator Benien’s business cards and advised to make a detailed listing of his concerns, the names of individuals and their connection to the project and send them to Administrator Benien. He was told that if it was determined it was not really an ethics matter, Administrator Benien would try to route him to the proper individuals or departments.

Old Business:
Minutes of the September 4, 2008 meeting were reviewed. A Motion to Approve the Minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Slattery with a second by Commissioner Zawacki. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Benien reviewed the monthly report with the Commission which outlined the training provided in September, 2008 and the nature of the ethics opinions rendered and complaints received.

A Basic Ethics training was provided on September 2, 2008 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Police Academy. A Basic Ethics training was provided on September 23, 2008 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for the Library Board and two of the Ethics Commissioners. Continuing Ethics training was provided on September 24, 2008 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Human Resources Center. Continuing Ethics training is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the Transit Department.

Three hotline call complaints and one e-mail complaint were received. Two of those complaints have been handled and resolved or referred. Two are open awaiting completion of a court date for potential further investigation on one and return of a complaint form on the other. Fourteen complaints are open pending investigation and/or resolution. Five complaints were resolved and closed. With corrections or additions a Motion to approve the Report was made by Commissioner Zawacki and seconded by Commissioner Castro. The Motion to approve was unanimous.

The status of the updates and revisions to the Ethics Code were reviewed. Administrator Benien is continuing her review and recommendation of the proposed changes. She hopes to be completed by the November meeting or shortly thereafter. Administrator Benien advised of her discussions with the legal department and a proposed change she intends to include with reference to the availability of subpoenas. The Code will be changed to reflect issuance through the municipal court instead of the District Attorney.

Commissioner Snorgrass has set up e-mail accounts for the other Commissioners and explained how to establish passwords and use the accounts in conjunction with other e-mail accounts. Commissioners who want Administrator Benien or other Commissioners to use the e-mail accounts will notify Administrator Benien.

Administrator Benien distributed a memorandum from Legislative Auditor Tom Wiss with respect to the 2008 and 2009 budgets and the cuts which had been made. As of the date of the meeting the budget cuts to the 2008 budget had been restored to the level initially requested. The request for additional funding for 2008 was denied and the 2009 budget cuts remain in place but Auditor Wiss and Chief Administrative Judge Lampson are working to get the budget restored. Only $7,900.00 was budgeted for 2009 although $37,900.00 was requested.

The recent indictments at the BPU were discussed and it was reported that Administrator Benien had been contacted about possibly assisting the BPU Ethics Commission. Concerns were expressed as to the potential amount of work involved. The general
consensus was that the UG Ethics Administrator did not have the time given the pending UG work.

Executive Session: No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Zawacki.

Seconded by Commissioner Slattery.

Passed Unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Next Meeting is November 6, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien_____

Ruth M. Benien
Ethics Administrator